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Letter dated 6 January 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the report of the South Pacific Subregional Workshop on Intergovernmental Forum on Forests Issues (see annex). The Workshop involved participants from government, non-government, regional and international organizations, and was held in Fiji from 22 to 24 September 1999.

I would be grateful if this letter and its annex could be distributed as a document of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests at its fourth session.

(*Signed*) Penny **Wensley**

00-26190 (E) 010200

ANNEX

A South Pacific Sub Regional Workshop on Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) Issues

22-24 September 1999 - Nadi, Fiji

WORKSHOP REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Representatives from Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu, Costa Rica - Canada initiative, 5 regional organisations and NGOs and 2 international organisations met in Nadi, Fiji from 22-24 September 1999 for a workshop to enable Pacific Island countries to consider Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) issues. The meeting was organised by Australia and was co-sponsored by New Zealand with support from Fiji.

Thirty seven participants from government, non-government, regional and international organisations attended the workshop. A list of participants is shown in (Attachment A). The following countries were invited but were not able to attend: Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Niue.

The workshop was opened by Ram Swarup - Fiji.

The objectives of the workshop were to determine:

- Potential regional co-operation to implement the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF)[1] proposals for action; and
- Views from experts in the region on:
  - IFF Category II issues;
  - key issues for (or **elements** of) international cooperation;
  - international arrangement **functions**;
  - **options** for international arrangements;
  - an agreed approach for representation at the fourth session of (IFF4) and the 8th meeting of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD8); and
  - future opportunities for interaction.

[1] The IPF was established by the UN and ran from 1995 to 1997 and preceded IFF.

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The workshop noted that the South Pacific Forum Secretariat is responsible for policy and coordination of regional issues of which forestry issues are dealt with through the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) Land Base Resources Working Group. The CROP Land Based Resources Working Group has tasked the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) to prepare a Regional Forests and Trees Strategy for submission to CSD8.

Methodology

The workshop was conducted in five sessions, the table below shows the chairperson and rapporteur for each of these sessions.

Session:	Chairperson:	Rapporteur:
1. Introduction	Ram Swarup Fiji	Peter Sheehan- Solomon Islands
2. Implementing Agreed Actions	Tevita Faka'osi Tonga	Livo Mele Vanuatu
3. Unresolved Issues – Cat II	Malaki Iakopo Samoa	Kanawi Pouru PIFTSP
4. International Arrangements – Cat III	Dike Kari PNG	Don Wijiwardana New Zealand
5. Workshop Outcomes	Ram Swarup Fiji	Peter Sheehan Solomon Islands

The drafting committee comprised the rapporteurs for each session.

The standard format for each of the sessions included: 1. presentations in plenary on key issues and 2. working groups to discuss key issues with report to plenary on final views. In the working groups, worksheets and relevant papers were used to facilitate the discussion.

Two working discussion groups were formed, one representing the Large Island countries[2] and the other representing the High and Small Island countries[3]. The composition of each group stayed the same during the workshop. The representatives from the organisations and NGOs also participated in these working groups.

REPORT ON DISCUSSIONS

Session 1: Introduction

The meeting was informed by a presentation providing background to the UN IPF/IFF by Jaime Hurtubia of the IFF Secretariat.

[2] Large island countries included Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

[3] High and small island countries included Samoa and Tonga. Some organisations and NGOs also participated in this working group's discussions.

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Session 2: Implementing Agreed IPF Actions

Tony Bartlett - Australia, - delivered a presentation explaining the IPF proposals for action, the Australian work in summarising the IPF proposals and conducting a national assessment of the implementation of the IPF proposals.

Questions were asked about the intended audience for various proposals for action (for example international, regional and national), as well as on the process for involving stakeholders in the assessment.

The two working groups discussed priorities for implementing the IPF proposals for action in the Pacific Island region as well as potential areas for further regional co-operation. The groups identified a list of 18 key proposals for action (Attachment B). Each group then identified the top 10 proposals from that list.

Both groups identified the following important proposals for action:

- Develop and implement national forest programmes – *IPF Element IA*
- National strategies for addressing deforestation and forest degradation – *IPF Element IB*
- Enhance the role of plantations – *IPF Proposal 28a*
- Identify and protect Traditional Forest Related Knowledge (TFRK) in consultation with indigenous people – *IPF Element IC particularly proposals relating to land tenure and intellectual property*
- Provision of financial resources for sustainable forest management including encouraging private investment – *IPF Element IIA*
- Develop market-based mechanisms to increase forest revenue – *IPF Proposals 70b, 69c under Element IIA*
- Capacity building to encourage management, conservation and sustainable development of forests – *IPF Element IIB*
- Improve national forest assessments including the full range of forest values – *IPF Element IIIA particularly IPF Proposal 89b*

The Large Island group also identified the following priority proposals:

- Action towards reforestation, afforestation and conservation – *relevant to IPF Proposals 58b &58c*
- Implement Codes of Practice – *IPF Proposal 69a,128c*

The High Island/Small Island group also identified the following priority proposals:

- Transfer of environmentally sound technologies – IPF Element IIB
- Develop and implement policies to address land tenure issues – *IPF Proposal 29c*

Participants requested that the list of Priority Areas (Attachment C) from the South Pacific Community Regional Forests and Trees Strategy based on

outcomes of Heads of Forestry Meetings be acknowledged in this report, as most of the priorities were also relevant to the IPF proposals.

The Large Island group identified seven possible areas for further regional co-operation to implement the IPF proposals for action:

- Advancement of codes of logging practice;
- Co-ordination of research into utilisation of lesser used species;
- Development of regional criteria and indicators for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM);
- Development of methodologies for valuation of multiple benefits of forests;
- Regional forest inventory including GIS databases;
- Development methodologies for collecting and recording TFRK, and drafting of appropriate legal framework; and
- Capacity building and training.

Opportunities exist for these actions to be supported by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), Asia Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC), existing regional organisations and the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) as well as through bilateral negotiations with donors.

Presentations were made by the Pacific Island Forests & Trees Support Program (PIF&TSP) and South Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP) indicating their views on priority issues and their roles in regional co-operation associated with forest issues. These presentations reinforced the priorities identified by the groups.

The participants further discussed the importance of ensuring that the IPF/IFF priorities identified were translated into action. In response to a question as to whether or not individual governments should take these priorities to IFF to assist their implementation, the IFF Secretariat indicated that IFF was a policy-making forum and that implementation should be carried out using national, bilateral and multilateral arrangements. The IFF intends to discuss further the important issue of provision of financial resources at IFF4 in February 2000. The workshop considered that positions should be forwarded to the IFF on issues that are still open for decision.

Session 3: Unresolved Issues – IFF Category II

The meeting considered the issues under Category II of the IFF agenda and agreed on nine priorities identified from the list as the basis for working group discussion.

The Large Islands group identified issues associated with financial resources, technology transfer and underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation.

The High and Small Islands group identified a number of priority issues associated with financial resources and TFRK.

In regard to financial resources both groups identified a need for a mechanism which would provide Pacific Island countries with better access to funds provided by both the private sector and Government. Groups acknowledged that the private sector would become more important, given the documented decline in resource flows. The region's land tenure system was seen as a significant factor in the move towards SFM. Possible new sources of funding through climate change convention opportunities, broadening of the use of the Global Environment Facility and a proposed Global Forest Fund were seen as worthy of further investigations.

Groups identified needs for capacity building for additional funding and to enable better identification of technology assets, needs and the protection of intellectual property rights. Full valuation of forest goods and services, more stringent penalties for legislative breaches and a focus on integrated land use planning were identified as critical factors for reducing deforestation and forest degradation.

A list of the significant issues raised by each group is provided in (Attachment D).

Session 4: International Arrangements and Mechanisms (Category III of IFF's Work Programme)

Three background papers relating to this issue were presented. Gary Dolman - Australia provided a presentation on elements, functions and options, Boyd Case, (representing the Costa Rica - Canada Initiative) provided an update on the Costa Rica - Canada Initiative in support of Category III work, and Jaime Hurtubia introduced a draft of the Secretary General's report on this area of work being prepared for IFF4.

The workshop discussed elements, functions and options for international arrangements over three separate sessions. These terms are defined in (Attachment E).

Regarding **elements**, the group developed a consolidated list of priority elements for use in consideration of Category III. This resulted from the lists produced in discussions on Category I and II issues and included additional four elements. This list is at (Attachment F).

Regarding **functions**, the group discussed the list of functions presented by the IFF Secretariat and those suggested by Australia. The workshop used the primary functions proposed by the IFF Secretariat and incorporated the original primary functions proposed by the IFF Secretariat. A list (Attachment G) was agreed by the workshop as a final set of functions, adding that sustainable forest management should be the main objective behind the delivery of these functions.

Regarding **options** for international arrangements and mechanisms, the workshop discussed the pros and cons of available options. This was followed by working group discussions to identify how best these options address the elements and functions identified in the previous sessions. The working groups also discussed possible preferred option/s for international arrangements for forests.

There was general agreement that policy implementation and co-ordination were of prime importance. It was considered that any arrangements should result in better utilisation of existing agencies involved in international sustainable forest management. It was also considered that it would be difficult for any single existing mechanism to adequately cover the entire international forest agenda.

The Large Island group felt that the most useful options on which to focus were:

- Establishing a mechanism for improved co-ordination of existing arrangements;
- A mandate-led body role for an existing organisation;
- An improved non-legally binding instrument;
- Extended scope of existing legally binding instruments; and
- Negotiating a framework convention.

The High and Small Islands working group identified an additional option of establishing a permanent forum for policy implementation and co-ordination.

There was emerging strong support for this latter option, which combined the primary functions of policy implementation and coordination supported by a non-legally binding but permanent forum. Legally binding options were considered by the workshop but were not favoured by most participants.

Session 5: Workshop Outcomes

Presentations were made by representatives of the Costa Rica - Canada initiative, PIF & TSP, SPREP and the IFF Secretariat on the best ways to progress the outcomes of this workshop, particularly in regard to contributing to FAO/APFC meetings, broader regional groups and for, the Costa Rica - Canada initiative and the IFF4 and CSD8 meetings.

The workshop noted that:

- IFF is deliberating on a range of issues that have potential benefits and impacts on forests and forest management in the Pacific Islands region;
- Pacific Island countries have not been well represented in this process;
- This workshop has offered an opportunity for Pacific Island countries to gain a better understanding of the key issues associated with the IPF/IFF processes; and
- The inclusion of the IPF/IFF process in the agenda of the APFC of the FAO could be of relevance and benefit to Pacific Island countries.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The meeting recommended that:

1. The report of the workshop, including the list of elements, functions and options considered and agreed by the workshop, be transmitted to:
   - The Costa Rica and Canada Initiative,
   - The UN Secretary General as an official document for IFF4, and
   - The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC);

2. The outcomes of this workshop also be forwarded to the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) Land-Based Resources Working Group for consideration in finalisation of the Regional Forest and Trees Strategy and its submission to CSD8;

3. As IFF is a forum that puts particular weight on national positions, Pacific Island countries consider developing a national position on any of the issues to be debated at IFF4 in New York in February 2000;

4. The report of this workshop be forwarded to the FAO office for Asia Pacific in Bangkok, Thailand, for consideration at the next APFC meeting to be held in Australia in May 2000 in the context of providing support for the implementation of IPF Proposals for Action identified as priorities;

5. The South Pacific Forum Secretariat assist and coordinate Pacific Island countries' input, and possible representation at IFF4 in New York in February 2000;

6. The offer from Costa Rica - Canada initiative to sponsor attendance at their final meeting in December 1999 to present the outcomes of this workshop be accepted and Dike Kari (PNG) be nominated as representative with Ram Swarup (Fiji) as alternative, with possibly also a South Pacific Forum Secretariat representative.

Attachments

A. List of Participants
B. Key IPF Proposals for Action for the Pacific Island Region
C. Heads of Forestry List of Priority Areas for Forests and Trees Sector
D. List of Workshop Views on Significant Category II Issues
E. Definitions of Elements, Functions and Options under IFF Category III
F. Agreed List of Elements in Indicative Order of Priority
G. Agreed List of Functions

Attachment A

List of Participants

Country Participants	
AUSTRALIA	Gary Dolman Director-State and International Relations Forest Industries Branch Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - Australia GPO Box 858 Canberra ACT 2601 Australia Tel: +61 2 6272 4500 Fax: +61 2 6272 4875 E-mail: gary.dolman@affa.gov.au Brian O'Neill Assistant Director International Forests Unit Environment Australia GPO Box 787 Canberra ACT 2601 Australia Tel: +61 2 6274 1294 Fax: +61 2 6274 1322 Email: brian.o'neill@ea.gov.au Tony Bartlett (at time of workshop) Dept of Natural Resources and Environment PO Box 500 East Melbourne VIC 3002 Tel: +61 3 9637 8469 Fax: 61 3 9637 8116 (presently) ACT Forests RMB 113 Cotter Road Weston ACT 2611 Australia Tel: +61 2 6207 2486 Fax: +61 2 6207 2544 Email: Tony_Bartlett@dpa.act.gov.au

/...

FIJI	Ram Swarup Acting Managing Director Fiji Pine Limited PO Box 521 Lautoka Fiji Tel: +679 661 511 Fax: +679 661 784 E-mail: fpimd@is.com.fj Lemeki Lenoa Deputy General Manager Fiji Forest Industries Labasa Fiji Tel: Fax: Lialkini Jiko Acting Conservator of Forests Forestry Headquarters PO Box 2218 Govt Buildings Suva Fiji Tel: +679 301 611 Fax: +679 301 595 Email:
NEW ZEALAND	Don Wijewardana Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry PO Box 2526 Wellington New Zealand Tel: +64 4 474 4100 Fax: +64 4 498 9891 Email: wijewardanad@maf.govt.nz David Rhodes Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry PO Box 2526 Wellington New Zealand Tel: Fax: Email: rhodesd@maf.govt.nz
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	Dike Kari Acting General Manager PNG Forests Authority PO Box 5055 Boroko NLD Papua New Guinea Tel: +675 327 7923 Fax: +675 327 7930 E-mail: pngfa.gm@datec.nld.png

/...

	Goodwill Amos Divisional Manager Resource Development PNG Forest Authority PO Box 5055 Boroko NLD Papua New Guinea Tel: +675 6277 819 Fax: +675 327 7930 E-mail: pngfa.gm@daiec.nld.png Terry Warra Divisional Manager, Forest Management PNG Forest Authority PO Box 314 Lae MP Papua New Guinea Tel: +675 472 6585 Fax: +675 472 6572 E-mail: pngfa.gm@daiec.nld.png
SAMOA	Malaki Iakopo Assistant Director – Forestry PO Box 1874 Apia Samoa Tel: +685 22561 Fax: +685 22565 Paletaogo Aso Senior Agricultural Officer Ministry of Agriculture PO Box 1874 Apia Samoa Tel: +685 22561 Fax: +685 22565
SOLOMON ISLANDS	Peter Sheehan Commissioner of Forests PO Box G240 Honiara Solomon Islands Tel: +677 257 52 Fax: +677 257 52 E-mail: forestry1@welkam.solomon.com.sb Moses Biliki Director Environment & Conservation Division P.O. Box G24 Honiara Solomon Islands Tel: +677 258 48 Fax: +677 212 45 E-mail: mosesb@welkam.solomon.com.sb

/...

TONGA	Tevita Faka'osi Director Forestry and Conservation PO Box 14 Nuku'alofa Tonga Tel: +676 29 500 Fax: +676 24 271
VANUATU	Livo Mele Director of Forestry Department of Forestry PMB Box 64 Port Vila Vanuatu Tel: +678 23171/23856 Fax: +678 25 051 E-mail: forestry@vanuatu.gov.vu Adam Gerrand Principal Forest Officer Department of Forestry PMB Box 64 Port Vila Vanuatu Tel: +678 23171/23856 Fax: +678 25 051 E-mail: forestry@vanuatu.gov.vu Tate Hannington Senior Forest Utilisation Officer Department of Forestry PMB Box 64 Port Vila Vanuatu Tel: +678 23171/23856 Fax: +678 25 051 E-mail: forestry@vanuatu.gov.au
Regional Interest Groups	
FOUNDATION OF THE PEOPLES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL	Andrew Sorley Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International PO Box 985 Laukota Fiji Tel: +679 662 535 Fax: +679 663 414 E-mail: sorley@is.com.fj
PACIFIC ISLAND FOREST AND TREE SUPPORT PROGRAM	Tang Hon Tat Programme Co-ordinator SPC Forestry Programme (PIF&TSP) C/- SPC Private Mail Bag Suva Fiji Tel: +679 300 432/305 244 Fax: +679 305 212 E-mail: spforest@spc.org.fj

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	Kanawi Pouru Forests and Trees Advisor SPC Forestry Programme (PIF&TSP) C/- SPC Private Mail Bag Suva Fiji Tel: +679 300 432/305 244 Fax: +679 305 212 E-mail: kanawiP@spc.org.fj Sairusi Bulai Regional Forestry Officer SPC Forestry Programme (PIF&TSP) C/- SPC Private Mail Bag Suva Fiji Tel: +679 300 432/305 244 Fax: +679 305 212 E-mail: spforest@spc.org.fj
SPREP	Sam Sesega Programme Officer (Resource Management) SPREP PO Box 240 Apia Samoa Tel: +685 21 929 Fax: +685 20 231 E-mail: sams@sprep.org.ws
SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM - SECRETARIAT	John Low Resources Adviser,Forum Secretariat, Private Bag Suva Fiji Tel: +679 312 600/220 329 Fax: +679 300 192 E-mail: johnl@forumsec.org.fj
SPC/GTZ PACIFIC GERMAN REGIONAL FORESTRY GROUP	Toakase Ratu Project Officer SPC/GTZ- Pacific German Regional Forestry Project House 10 Forum Secretariat GPO Box 14041 Suva Tel: +679 305 983 Fax: +679 315 446 Email: gtz@is.com.fj
PACIFIC BIOWEB	Ian Fry Pacific BioWeb GPO Box 224 Canberra ACT 2601 Tel: +61 2 6230 6828 Fax: +61 2 6230 6740 Mobile: 041 304 2139 Email: ifry@mpx.com.au

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International participants	
IFF - SECRETARIAT	Jaime Hurtubia Principal Environmental Officer Secretriat of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests Two UN Plaza DC2-1254 New York NY 10017 Tel: +212 963 4219 Fax: +212 963 3463 E-mail: hurtubia@un.org
COSTA RICA AND CANADA INITIATIVE	Boyd Case 580 Booth St Ottowa ON Canada KIA OE4 Tel: +613 947 9103 Fax: +613 943 9033 E-mail: bcase@NRCan.gc.ca
FAO	Aru Mathias FAO SAPA Private Mail Bag Apia, Samoa Tel: +685 22127 Fax: +685 22126 E-mail: Aru.Mathias@field.fao.org
Secretariat	
	Sue Keeling Secretariat State and International Relations Forest Industries Branch Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - Australia GPO Box 858 Canberra ACT 2601 Australia Tel: +61 2 6272 4759 Fax: +61 2 6272 4875 E-mail: sue.keeling@affa.gov.au Tracey Reed Secretariat State and International Relations Forest Industries Branch Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - Australia GPO Box 858 Canberra ACT 2601 Australia Tel: +61 2 6272 3430 Fax: +61 2 6272 4875 E-mail: tracey.reed@affa.gov.au

Attachment B

Key IPF Proposals for Action for the Pacific Island Region

- Develop and implement national forest programmes – *IPF Element IA*
- National strategies for addressing deforestation – *IPF Element IB*
- Enhance the role of plantations – *IPF Proposal 28b*
- Identify TFRK with indigenous people and protect intellectual property rights – *IPF Element IC*
- Develop and implement policies to address land tenure issues– *IPF Proposal 29c*
- Action towards reforestation, afforestation and conservation – *IPF Proposals 58b & 58c*
- Provision of financial resources for Sustainable Forest Management including encouraging private investment – *IPF Element IIA*
- Develop market-based mechanisms to increase forest revenue – *IPF Proposals 70b & 69c*
- Transfer of environmentally sound technologies – *IPF Element IIB*
- Capacity building to encourage sustainable forest and tree management – *IPF Proposals 17g & 70e*
- Improve national forest assessments and GIS databases – *IPF Proposal 89b*
- Improve cooperation and mobilise resources for forest research – *IPF Element IIIB*
- Improve the estimates of values of all forest goods and services – *IPF Proposals 89c & 89h*
- Improve dissemination of research and forest information – *IPF Proposal 94a*
- Prepare national criteria and indicators for SFM – *IPF Proposal 115a*
- Improve market access for forest products – *IPF Proposals 128b*
- Implement Codes of Practice – *IPF Proposals 69a & 128c*
- Improve utilisation of lesser used species – *IPF Proposals 132a & 132b*

Attachment C

Heads of Forestry List of Priority Areas for Forests and Trees Sector

PRIORITY AREAS FOR FORESTS AND TREES SECTOR

Subject	Priority Areas	Regional Importance
Policy and Legislation	1. National forest (and land use) policies and legislation (formulation, implementation and monitoring).	High
Forest Management	1. Sustainable forest tree/land use & management practices e.g. codes of harvesting, "best – practices" etc.	Very High
	2. Forest regeneration (natural and artificial) and silviculture systems.	High
	3. More active involvement of, and equitable distribution of benefits to, all stakeholders.	Very high
	4. Forest certification systems.	Medium
	5. Quantification and "mainstreaming" (i.e. user-pays) of vital services provided by forests and trees (e.g. soil and water protection, carbon sequestration, essential NTFPs[4]).	High
	6. Capacity building, and technical and other support.	Very High
Forest tree products utilisation	1. Improved utilisation (reduced wastage) and down-stream processing of timber and non-timber forest products (e.g. nuts, fruits, medicinal plant, sandalwood, rattans, bamboo. (Morinda citrigolia), especially of lesser-used species.	Very high
	2. Improved marketing and markets for timber and non-timber forest products (including lesser-used species).	Very high
	3. Appropriate/new technology (e.g. mobile sawmills, wood ovens/stoves, improved uses of (renewable) wood energy).	High
	4. Capacity building, and technical and other support.	High
Forest Tree development	1. Natural regeneration systems for timber and NTFPs.	Very High

[4] NTFPs - Non-Timber Forest Products

	2. Artificial regeneration systems for timber & NTFPs (plantations, enrichment planting).	High
	3. Appropriate/new technology (e.g. vegetative propagation's, tissue culture).	High
	4. Capacity building, and technical and other support.	Very High
Watershed Management	1. Proper and coordinated land use practices in watersheds.	Very High
	2. Community awareness and involvement.	Very High
	3. Capacity building and technical and material support.	High
Forest and trees in atoll ecosystems	1. Quantification of role and impacts of forests and trees, and improved awareness and community involvement.	High
	2. Improved use and management of existing F&T resources (e.g. mangroves, coastal protection, home lots).	Very High
	3. Development of improved F & T resources (e.g. multipurpose trees, bamboo).	High
	4. Capacity building, and technical and other support.	High
Regional focal point and information clearing house	1. Coordination and/or increase availability and use of national and donor resources for PIC/Ts[5].	Very high
	2. Provision of information clearing house on forests and trees to PIC/Ts and to the interested parties.	High

[5] Pacific Island Countries/Territories

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Attachment D

List of Workshop Views on Significant Category II Issues

Key Category II Issues (in priority order)

1. The need for financial resources;
2. Transfer of technology;
3. Traditional forest related knowledge;
4. Underlying causes of deforestation;
5. Trade and environment;
6. Valuation of forest goods and services;
7. Forest conservation and protected areas;
8. Economic instruments, tax policies and land tenure; and
9. Forest related work of organisations.

Time did not permit participants to fully address all of the nine Category II issues. Instead only the top four were considered. Both groups discussed 1 and 2 in detail while 3 was addressed only by the high and small island group and 4 only by the large island group.

Workshop views

Financial Resources

Large Island Countries

- Identify Financial resources needs:
  - to capture private sector contributions;
  - to make better use of available funds, prevent wastage etc.;
  - greater access to funds, recognising special needs of the region;
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has documented declining resource Overseas Development Aid (ODA) flows;
- Establish a New Global Forest Fund:
  - linked to a new International Arrangement and Mechanism;
  - recognise need to generate new funds:
    - carbon-storage opportunities;
    - industry contributions;
- Supporting Capacity building at a national/regional level:
  - to apply for funding;
  - expected to do more with less;

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- Custom tenure means 'reservation' is not appropriate

High and Small Island Countries

- Difficult to access funds from the private sector and from existing funds;
- Forestry's failure to attract funding, as a consequence of low priority rating by governments in high and small island countries;
- Full valuation of forests, goods and services is needed to demonstrate the importance of SFM;
- Forest operations to receive adaptation funding from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Technology Transfer

Large Island Countries

- Recognition that much technology is private sector owned:
  - create suitable environment for transfers;
- Government 'technologies' could help create such an environment for private sector transfers:
  - sharing experiences on policies
  - codes of logging practice
  - inventory; and
- Capacity building needed to enable resource owners to identify technology need:
  - Government role.

Traditional Forest Related Knowledge (TFRK)

High and Small Island Countries

- The regions unique land tenure system could offer a model for other regions. Although the system could facilitate a consultative process in the use and management of forests, it has also created difficulties for the implementation of SFM in some cases;
- There is a need to find a mechanism which would ensure access and security of forest resources for TFRK in SFM; and
- It is important that the intellectual property rights associated with traditional knowledge is recognised and mechanisms developed for its protection.

Underlying Causes of Deforestation

Large Island Countries

Causes:

- Clearing (for fuel-wood) without replanting/regeneration;
- Product to generate development;
- Clearing for agriculture;
- Planning in the forest sector is not comprehensive enough; and
- Not valuing all forest services.

Remedies:

- Sustainable use of forests;
- Better use of whole forest resource (including lesser used species);
- Tougher penalties (industry);
- Comprehensive planning – land use in total; and
- Full valuation of forest services.

Attachment E

Definitions of Elements, Functions and Options under IFF Category III

In the context of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests the elements, functions and options have the following meaning.

Elements: The IFF is seeking "to identify a set of elements that collectively would constitute an international priority agenda to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests." *(IFF3 document - E/CN.17/IFF/1999/16, page 9 para. 41).*

Functions: The concept of functions was introduced at IFF3 *(IFF3 document - E/CN.17/IFF/1999/16, page 8 para. 36)* and will be elaborated further at IFF4. Essentially the functions of an international arrangement on forests describe how that arrangement will go about implementing the 'elements'. At the workshop the IFF Secretariat introduced the notion of four possible primary functions:

- Policy development
- Coordination
- Policy implementation and
- Legislative authority.

Options: Are the alternative means of delivering the elements and functions using either existing arrangements or new arrangements. Eleven possible options were introduced at the workshop by the IFF Secretariat:

- Continue on-going ad-hoc dialogue;
- Establish a new permanent intergovernmental forum for policy dialogue;
- Establish a mechanism for improved coordination of existing arrangements;
- Mandate-led body role for an existing organization;
- Improved non-legally binding instruments;
- Establish a World Forest Organization;
- Establish a World Forest Action Programme;
- Extend the scope of existing legally-binding instruments;
- Use or restructure existing regional mechanisms;
- Negotiate a framework convention allowing for regional mechanisms; and
- Negotiate a new legal framework.

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Attachment F

Agreed List of Elements in Indicative Order of Priority

From the list of IPF/IFF programme elements.

1. National Forest Programmes;
2. Financial Resources;
3. Capacity Building;
4. Economic Instruments and Land Tenure;
5. Transfer of Technology;
6. Traditional Forest Related Knowledge (TFRK);
7. Values of Forests Goods And Services;
8. Policies to Address Land Tenure Issues;
9. Causes of Deforestation;
10. Trade and Environment;
11. National Forest Assessments;
12. Role of Plantations;
13. Criteria and Indicators;
14. Codes of Practice;
15. Supply and Demand of Wood, Non Wood Forest Products and Services;
16. Conservation and Protected Areas;
17. Forest Related Work of Organisations;
18. Research Priorities;
19. Utilisation of Lesser Known Species; and
20. Dissemination of Research.

Additional elements from the South Pacific Region

- Land Use Practices In Watershed Management;
- Effective Partnerships Between Stakeholders and Organisations;
- Land Use Practices/Policies/Planning; and
- Political Commitment To Sustainable Forest Management.

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Attachment G

Agreed List of Functions

OBJECTIVE: MANAGEMENT, CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL TYPES OF FORESTS

Policy Development

- Develop/guide/promote/formulate policy; and
- Ensure forests are considered in the full range of related/connected international agendas (e.g. Agriculture, poverty).

Coordination

- Coordinate work and strengthen linkages between organisations/instruments; and
- Support/identify needs for cooperation and implementation taking into account different regional and country circumstances.

Policy Implementation

- Set priorities and facilitate action, including emerging issues;
- Review/report progress towards SFM, incl. provision of an efficient and consistent reporting framework;
- Facilitate capacity building and information sharing; and
- Secure financial support.